

## Poetry.

### A PILGRIM SONG.

When the sky is bright above me,  
When around all seem to love me,  
When no fears or troubles move me,  
Then I'll trust in God.

He's the source of all my pleasure;  
He, from out his richest treasure,  
Gives me, without stint or measure,  
Bliss at home, abroad.

When the way is dark and eerie,  
When my feet are worn and weary,  
When my heart is sad and dreary,  
Then I'll trust in God.

He it is who kindly leads me,  
He who daily clothes and feeds me,  
And I know whate'er my needs be  
He will help afford.

On the mount or in the valley,  
On the highway, lane, or alley,  
I will still my courage rally,  
Singing: "Trust in God."

He's my all; I want no other;  
Jesus is my elder brother;  
Tender as a loving mother,  
Is my blessed Lord,

—Rev. Peter Stryker, D. D.

## Contributions.

### PREDESTINED.

B. C. MOOMAW.

"All scripture is given by inspiration, and is profitable for doctrine," and so on, but to the disciples of Arminius, both ancient and modern, and of whatever name, Lutheran, Methodist or Dunkard, all those emphatic and profound scriptures, found particularly in the Pauline writings concerning divine election, are, to say the least, unopened and unworked mines of spiritual knowledge and comfort. As it very frequently happens in religious controversy, the revolt from the ultra Calvinism of the reformation period led to the opposite extreme of ultra Arminianism, which practically affects to treat all the scriptures teaching fore-ordination as interpolations, or else as mysteries on a part with the inexplicable visions of Revelations. They are neither, but on the contrary are capable I think, of intelligent exposition, and of profound and profitable application to the Christian life and Christian experience.

It would be an interesting but endless task to review the rich and voluminous literature of this subject. Paul of course begins it in Rom. 8: 29, 30, and 9: 11-25; Eph. 1: 4, 5; II Thess. 2: 13, and II Tim. 1: 9. Peter gives no uncertain sound in I Pet. 1: 2. Augustine was perhaps the first post-apostolic theologian who formulated the doctrine, and made it an article of faith. His infralapsarian tenet,

that God elects whom he will out of the whole mass of fallen humanity, passed current in his times, and for long after; but when Gottschalk built upon this foundation the rather too severely logical doctrine of reprobation, there followed a revolt, and a violent controversy which finally had to be suppressed by the general councils of the ninth century.

Augustine's infralapsarianism was revived by the reformers as a body, and some of them added Gottschalk's reprobation, but the latter theory has been tacitly abandoned by the Calvinists themselves, as tending to bring the doctrine of election into reproach. As the theological world now stands we have a mild, spiritual Calvinism, which very acceptably fills the place of the harsh judicial Calvinism, which the author of the doctrine himself was constrained to call "a horrible decree." We hear of no controversies, we see no new books on this subject, for with its modern modifications there is not enough error in it, and certainly too much truth, to justify a wholesale denial. Besides, in the general spirit of interdenominational fraternity, Calvinism, as well as all other distinctive and controversial doctrines, is more or less relegated to the back ground.

It is impossible to misunderstand the language, or evade the authority and force of Rom. 8: 29, 30. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified." The other references before mentioned are just as clear and forcible, but in this scripture we are given a key to the doctrine in the initial statement, "Whom he foreknew."

If God is infinite in his prescience, which cannot be doubted, it is impossible that there should have been, in is now in the world, a single individual whom he did not foreknow, or in the sense of foreknowing his character, his history, his very thoughts. Therefore we are forced to the conviction that the foreknowledge of the text is special, obtaining in reference to certain untrammelled acts of his will, under circumstances which enabled him to act freely and intelligently, and therefore with full responsibility. For instance a man gifted with foreknowledge might be perfectly willing to invite all his neighbors to a feast, but knowing beforehand who would accept and who would refuse, he would naturally inscribe the names of the former class among his guests, and pass by the latter.

It is true that no man can accept the

offer of salvation without the active intervention and efficient aid of the Holy Spirit, and the objection has been raised that if God would give the like aid to many more, or to all, that many more, or perhaps all, would likewise be saved. But this objection is thoroughly set at rest by the words of our Savior, and by the experience of Christian workers, that multitudes live in all ages and nations who will, who deliberately determine, not to be saved, even though God himself plead with them in person. They make free choice of the pleasures of sin for a season, and forget God because they do not want to retain him in their knowledge. They resist the Holy Spirit until he departs from them, for God has said: "My Spirit will not always strive with men." He will not invade the sacred precincts of the human will with any other influence but that of persuasion; and in this absolute freedom and inviolability of the will is founded the scriptural doctrine of election, based as it is upon God's perfect foreknowledge of what the persistent and final decision of that will would be, in each and every individual case, through all the ages of time.

Therefore our own foreseen choice has had much to do with our original election before the foundation of the world, while the present and the actual effect of our choice, definitely and effectively persevered in, is to make that election sure. At this point it is again objected that being, in the first instance, dead in trespasses and sins, we are totally incapable of any spiritual action whatever, any step toward God, previous to the vital act of awakening, which must be accomplished solely by God's power, so that it is literally "not of him that willeth, nor him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." This is undoubtedly true, but the objector loses sight of the distinction that while an unregenerate heart cannot act *positively* in any spiritual direction, it can act *negatively*, with great force and effect. Stephen said to the Jews who murdered him, who were certainly not regenerate men, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." That is the one thing which the spiritually dead can do, "withstand, resist, the Holy Ghost," and that fact silences all objections both to the doctrine of sovereign grace, and that of free will.

It follows then that if we are *willing* to be saved, we put ourselves in line with God's power, his Holy Spirit, and his eternal purposes. Yea more, if we simply cease our resistance to that Holy Spirit, even this *passive* attitude will quickly result in all the subsequent, active, efficient and fruitful stages of personal salvation. It also follows with irresistible logical force that once we become the happy